whether it is a fact that even after 60 years of independence, socio-economic conditions of the oppressed people had not improved; and

if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) The comparative budget allocation for the last three years is as follows:

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment:

(Rs. in crores)

Year	Total allocation	For Scheduled Castes
2004-05	1237.34	905.10
2005-06	1539.032	1148.75
2006-07	1686.11	1285.17

Ministry of Tribal Affairs: (Rs. in crores)

Year	Total allocation	For Scheduled Tribes
2004-05	1069.45	1053.06
2005-06	1398.82	1391.95
2006-07	1652.68	1648.14

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Coverage of **Old Age Homes**

442**.** SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

the total coverage of senior citizens under the Old Age Homes scheme; and

how many needy aged persons are left uncovered under the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) About 43800 senior citizens benefited from the Old Age Homes supported by the Ministry in the year . 2006-07.

(b) No records are available within the Ministry about the persons who may need the services of old age homes being funded under the Scheme.

Rehabilitation of differently abled persons in Tamil Nadu

443. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the schemes being implemented by Government for the rehabilitation of differently abled persons in Tamil Nadu;

(b) the amount allocated to the State for the implementation of those schemes during each of the last three years and the amount spent;

(c) the number of differently abled persons rehabilitated in the State during each of the last three years, disability-wise;

whether Government proposes to provide any special assistance to the State to rehabilitate persons with disabilities in the State; and

if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme and ADIP Schemes are being implemented by the Government of India for the rehabilitation of the differently abled persons in Tamil Nadu.

(b) to (e) Instead of State-wise allocation, funds under these Schemes are released to the NGOs/ImpIementing Agencies. During 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07, Rs. 616.83 lakhs, Rs. 598.68 lakhs and Rs. 828.74 lakhs respectively were released for rehabilitation of 19,240, 43, 508 and 40,329 differently abled persons respectively in the State of Tamil Nadu. In view of the on-going rehabilitation Schemes already in force additional Schemes for special assistance to the States are not envisaged.

Draft Policy on Scheduled Tribes

444. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

whether Government has sent a Draft Policy on Scheduled Tribes to the State Governments for their consideration;

if so, the steps Government have taken, so far, to remove obstacles coming in the way of including various Castes of Tribes in the Scheduled Tribes' list; and

if not, the reasons for inordinate delay on the part of the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes for not disposing of the pending cases when such cases were duly recommended by the State Governments for inclusion in the Scheduled Tribes' list?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH): (a) and (b) Draft National Tribal Policy formulated by Ministry of Tribal Affairs in June, 2006, was sent to *i* the State Governments for their comments and suggestions on 6.7.2006. The Draft Policy envisages the procedure as prescribed in Article 342 of the Constitution for scheduling of communities as tribes, and also emphasizes to review the existing criteria followed for determination of a community to be classified as schedueld tribe. The final draft of Policy was placed before the Union Cabinet for approval on 31st May, 2007. The Union Cabinet has referred it to a Group of Ministers for harmonization with the National Rehabilitation Policy. The Policy has not been finalized.

(c) At present, the claims for inclusion in/exclusion from and other modifications in orders specifying Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes lists, are settled in accordance with the modalities laid down by the Government on 15.6.1999. Since the proposals recommended bythe State Governments and agreed by the Registrar General of India (RGI) require a critical examination by National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST).